Presentations
for the

October 28, 2019

City Council Meeting

COUNCIL MEETING
October 28, 2019
☑Received Before Meeting
9

Rail Communications and Community Engagement Update

October 28, 2019

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Purpose

1. Inform on Efforts Underway and Planned

2. Gain Council Feedback

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Phases of Connecting Palo Alto

Understanding the Options

Engineering analysis

Neighbors and other stakeholders provide input

Ensure clarity in describing issues

Community Conversations

Community-wide awareness and engagement

Stakeholders advocate for/against options

Integrate with regional initiatives

Decision-making

Regional/funding viability assessed

Local funding strategy defined

XCAP Recommendation

City Council decision

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Communications and Community Engagement Goals

Understanding the Options

Build community awareness of the need for action

Initial community feedback informs options and scope of technical evaluations

Provide opportunities for community questions and input

Report back on what we've heard

Community Conversations

Inform community on options and impacts (costs, traffic, visual, property, etc.)

Provide multiple methods to inform and gain feedback

Demonstrate the City is listening and answer questions as the process evolves

Tally feedback gained, share evolving input with City Council

Decision-making

Receive community advocacy

Report back on what we've heard

XCAP Recommendation

City Council decision

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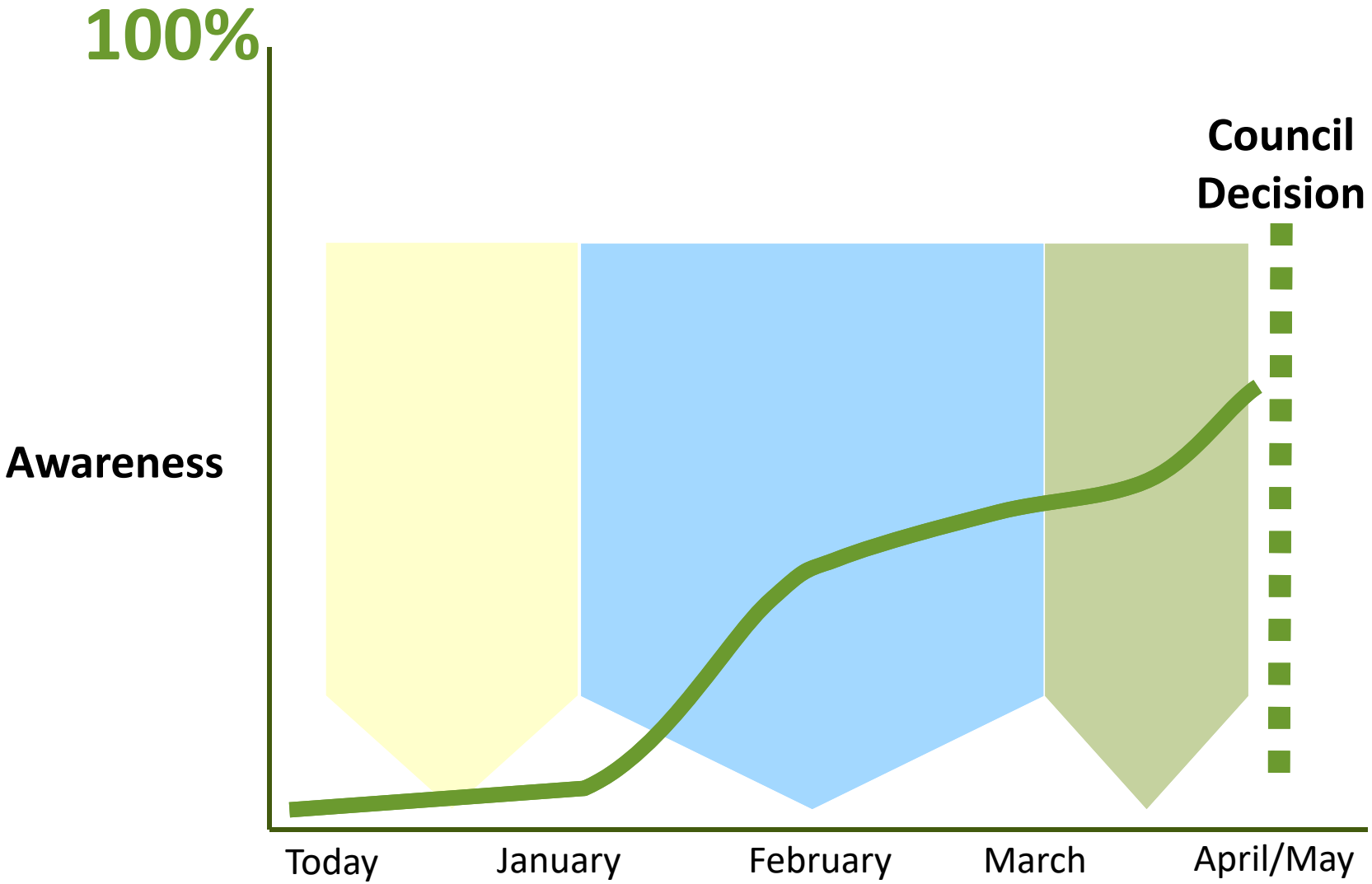
Building Awareness



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“Understanding the Options” Phase

Communications Strategies

- New website
- New blog series
- New digital newsletter
- Community Meeting
- Fact sheets/one-pager
- Social media focused messaging
- Tailored frequently asked questions

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CONNECTING PALO ALTO COMMUNITY MEETING

Learn about the City's rail grade separation process & share input

Thursday, November 7, 2019
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Mitchell Park Community Center
3700 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto

For more details, go to www.connectingpaloalto.com

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“Community Conversations” Phase

Community Engagement Strategies

- Transportation Talks
- XCAP Meetings
- Three Town Hall Meetings: Mid-February, Late March, Early April
- Tables at Community Events
- Online and Printed Surveys

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Timeline: Communications & Community Engagement Milestones

October

Launch New Website

Publish New Blog series

November

Host Community Meeting- Nov. 7

Launch Transportation digital newsletter

Publish fact sheets

Winter

Begin Transportation Talks

Return to Council to discuss Rail Blue Ribbon Committee

Feb.-March

Town Hall #1

Town Hall #2

Town Hall #3

Online Survey

Community Event Series

April/May

Report what we heard

XCAP Recommendation

City Council Decision

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Questions/Feedback

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10/28/2019
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XCAP Update

Nadia Naik (Chair)

Larry Kline (Vice Chair)

City Council Meeting 10/28/19

XCAP is in transition

- Members have been briefed on the Brown Act by City Attorney
- XCAP is seeking a single email address for group to receive information (pending)
- Adopted preliminary Guiding Principles and Procedural Rules
- Oct 30th – Definition of ”Consensus” and internal process to report Final Recommendations
- New phase of Feedback and Community Outreach

Adopted XCAP Guiding Principles
(as of 10/28/19)

Strive towards a shared stakeholder vision to provide a basis for decisions

Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of contexts

Foster continuing communication and collaboration to achieve consensus

Exercise flexibility and creativity to shape effective transportation solutions, while preserving and enhancing community and natural environments

Changes to How XCAP Operates

- Chair/Vice Chair will work with Staff to create agenda
- City Manager will attempt to distribute info to XCAP members/public at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting
- Attendance matters – 3 consecutive unexcused absences means removal
- Ongoing list of unanswered questions will be maintained and carried forward each meeting
- Well defined process, focus, timeline and outcomes along with ”open discussion”
- Group Norms aimed at developing collaborative work

Proposed Goal of XCAP Process

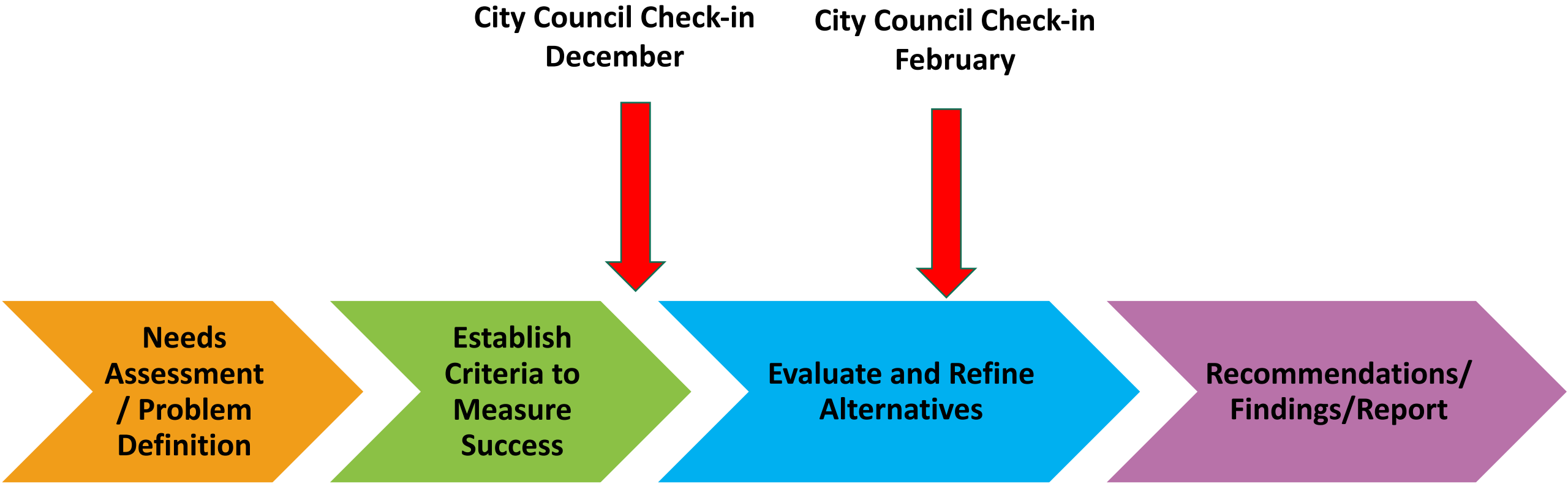
What have we learned?

Messy process, but we've learned a lot!

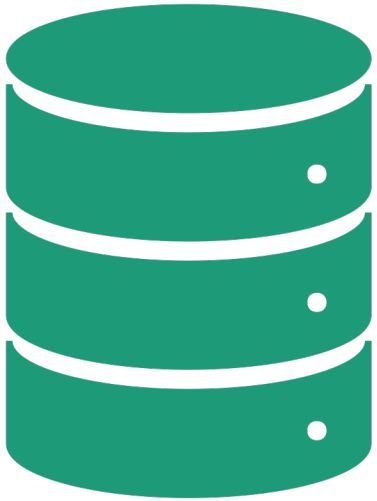
- We now have visuals of alternatives with more data
- Improved understanding of Alma's relationship to the crossings
- Acknowledgement and improved understanding that a relationship exists between Churchill and Embarcadero
- Existing conditions (creeks, existing underpasses) limit design flexibility
    - "cookie-cutter" options are hard without design exemptions or loosening of key assumptions
- New grade separations can induce traffic – care must be taken to adjust accordingly
- New ideas/iterations have come forward
- XCAP Members report :
    - neighbors know little to nothing about the project
    - still many who don't understand the need for grade separations.
- Community members are engaged and contributing
- We are still missing key info to make recommendations

DRAFT – XCAP will be discussing at upcoming meeting

Proposed Process and Timeline



Updates Needed - Will Leverage Previous Work



- Previous work was before Caltrain had a clear Service Vision
- Updates needed:
  - **Needs Assessment / Problem Statement** (Aug 2017) -different consultant, different council and no CAP input
  - **Criteria** adopted in Sept 2018 (not measurable and does not include updated understanding of issues)
- Holistic review of existing data can be used to develop measurable criteria
  - Leverage existing data, lessons learned and group domain expertise
  - Comp Plan, Rail Corridor Study, previous work and community input has valuable data and guidance
- XCAP would provide Council with update and seek endorsement of next steps

DRAFT – FOR DISCUSSION ONLY – INPUT WELCOME!!

Problem Definition and Criteria

Needs Assessment / Problem Definition

- Expected outcomes must be needed, achievable and specific
- Current conditions (Builds on previous Data / Reports and lessons learned)
- Broad-based problem statement reflecting all aspects of community context and values.
- **Does not offer a solution**

Evaluation Criteria / Measures of Success

- Council needs clear and credible recommendations
- Builds on the adopted Council Criteria
- Criteria should be based on the defined problem
- Uses existing metrics from City Plans/Reports
- Will be presented to City Council for approval

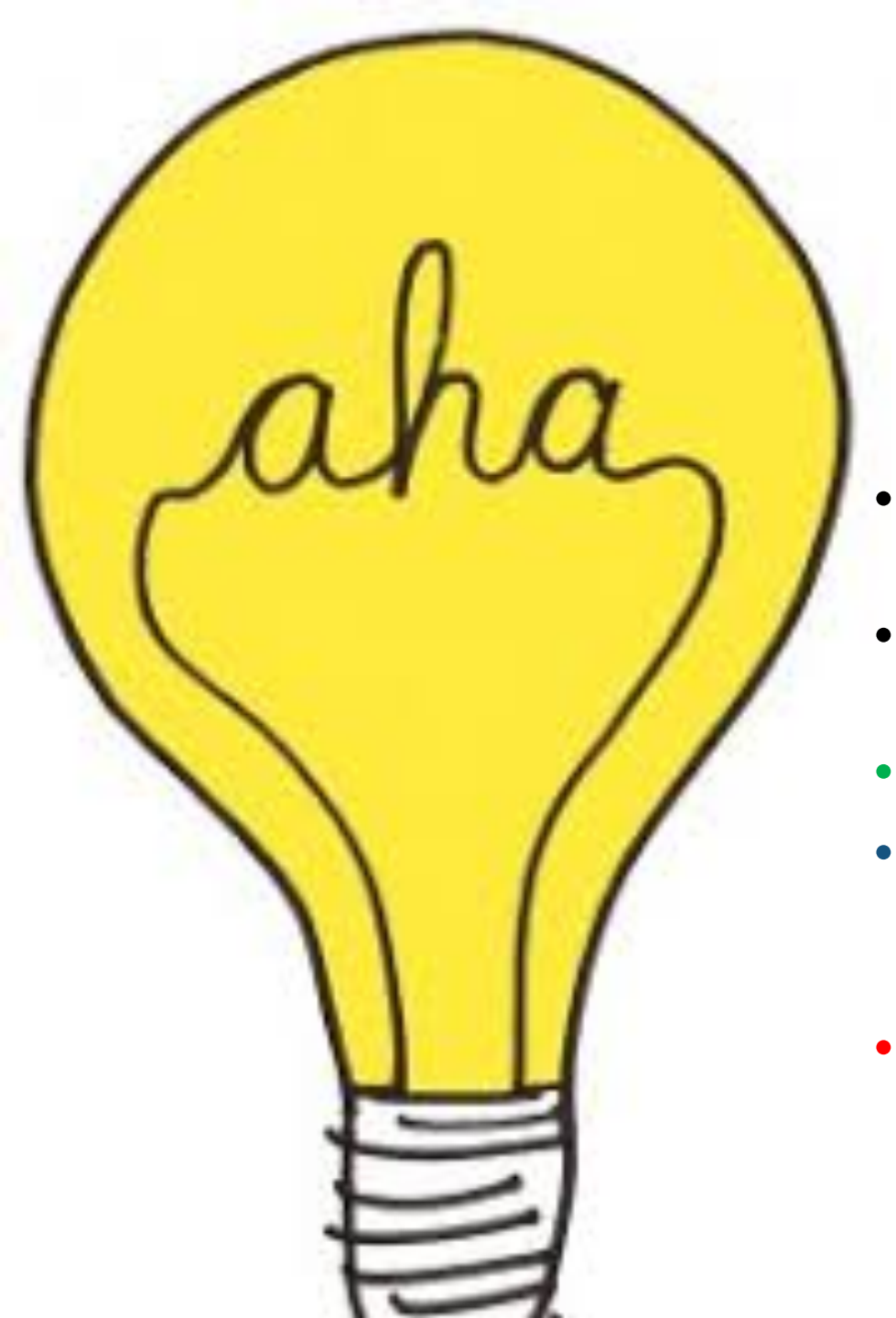
Evaluation and Report

Evaluate and Refine Alternatives

- Alternatives Assessment based on evaluation criteria reflective of the context, problem definition and evaluation criteria.

Finalize Evaluation/Documentation

- Results of measuring alternatives against defined measures of success
- If complete consensus is not possible, describe minority concerns
- If complete analysis is not possible, clearly describe remaining work and risks



What about New Ideas?

- XCAP empowered by Council on Sept 9th to review new ideas and iterations
- XCAP Oct 30th meeting - calls for consideration of process for evaluating new ideas and iterations
- **Some new iterations have already come forward!**
- **If XCAP decides new ideas or iterations warrant a closer look, XCAP will bring to City Council in December for feedback**
- XCAP members are aware significant costs are associated with additional work and recommendations for further study should be made after screening and judiciously.

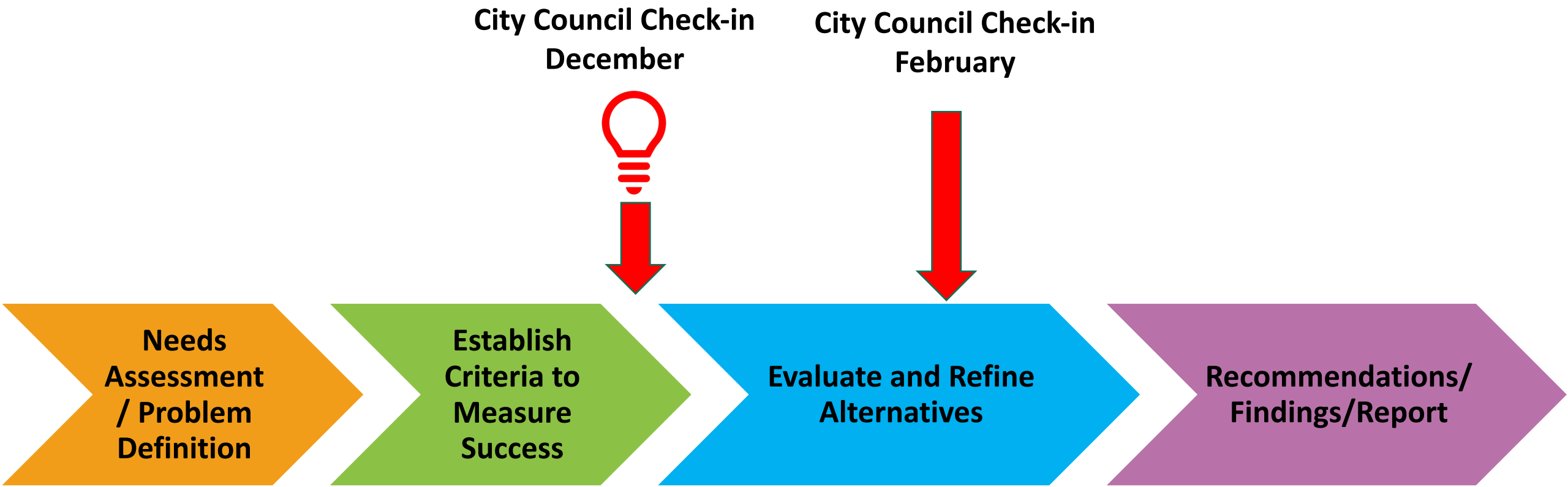
Check-in with City Council tentatively 12/9/2019

If XCAP approves to process outlined, then at December meeting, Council would:

- Endorse Needs Assessment, Problem Statement and Evaluation Criteria, and provide additional feedback
- Review any XCAP recommendations for new iterations/alternatives
- Provide feedback on pending questions / any missing technical data, etc.

DRAFT – XCAP will be discussing at upcoming meeting

Proposed Process and Timeline



Questions?

874 Boyce Avenue

October 28, 2019

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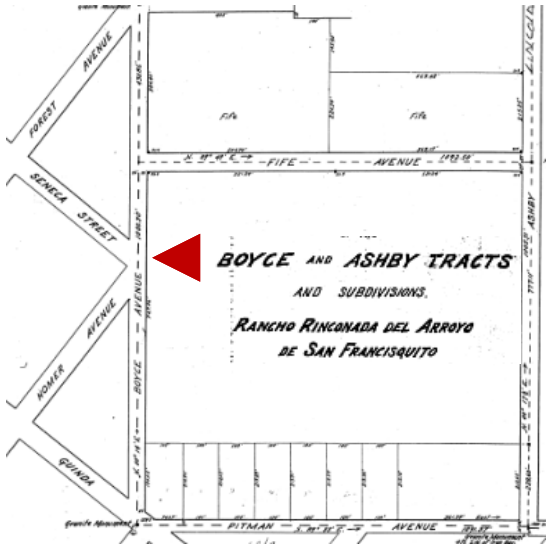
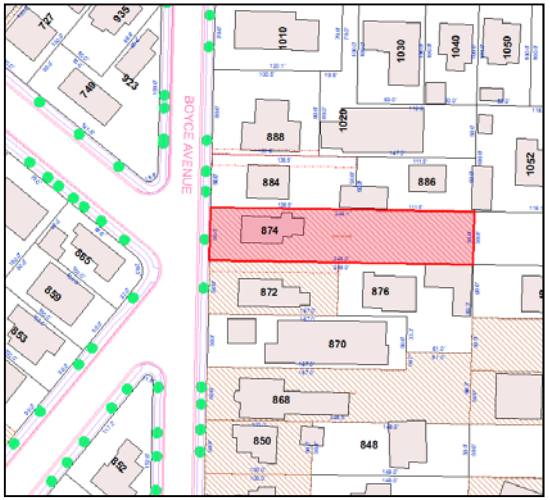
Subdivision History – Boyce Tracts in Crescent Park

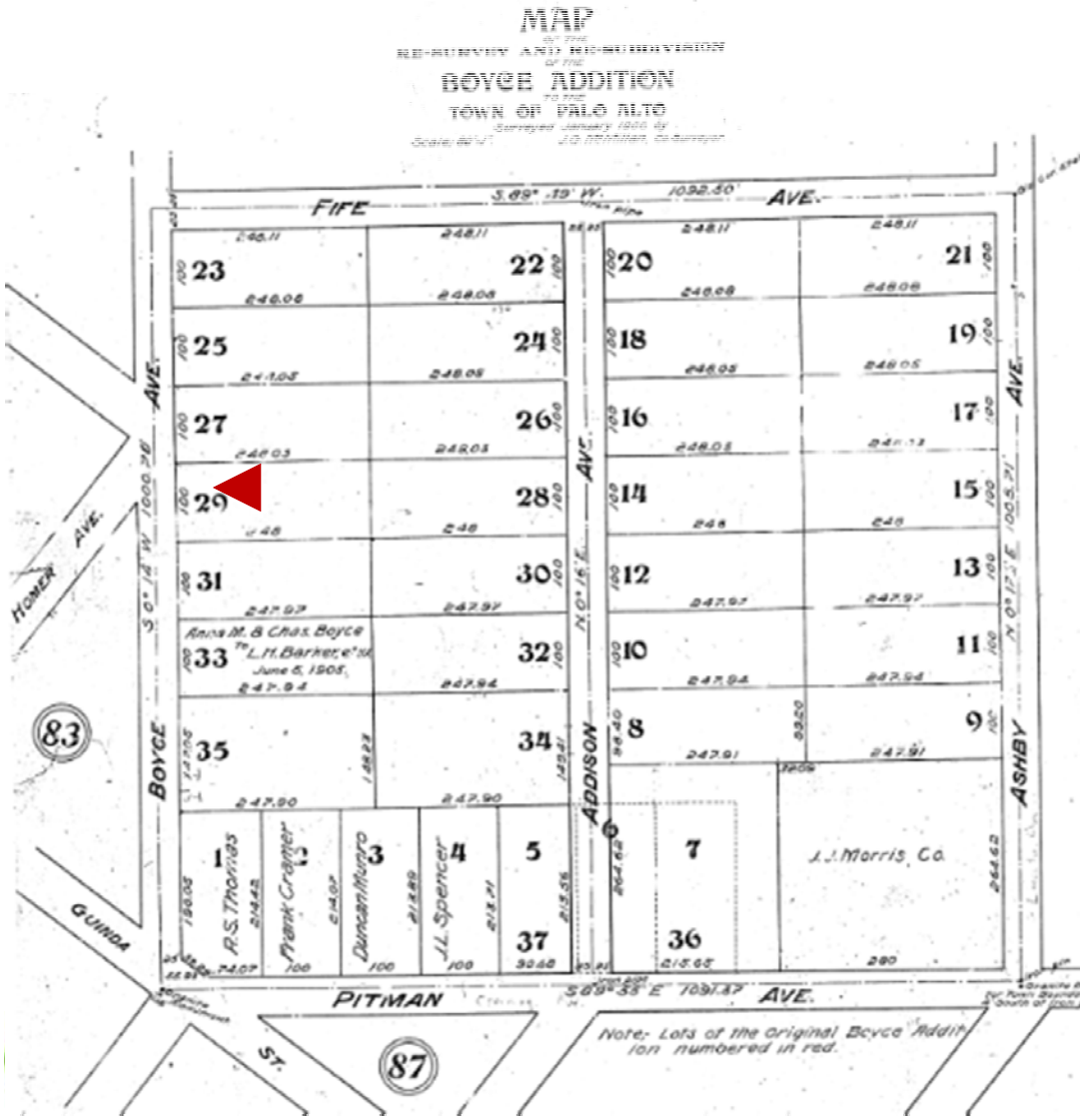
Boyce Ashby Tract ca 1905





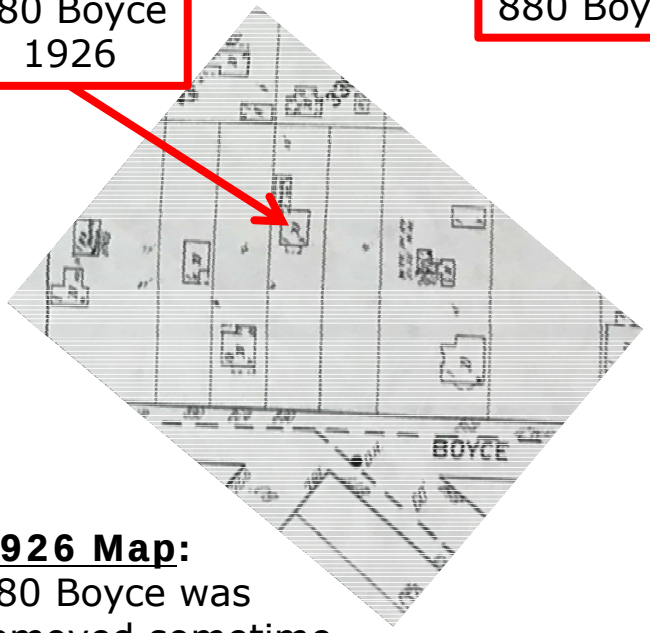
Today

Boyce Addition Tract – Addison added 1906

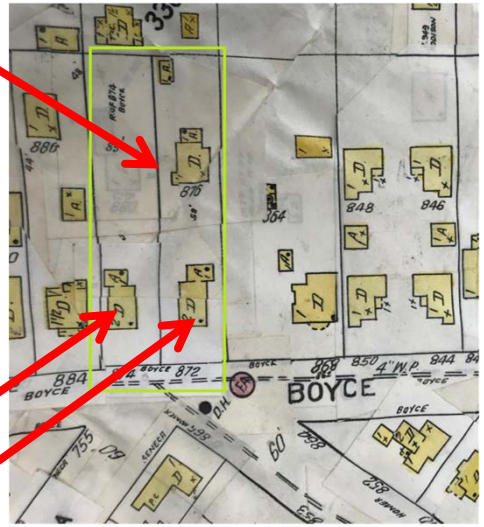


Development Timeline: 880 Boyce and Sister Homes

880 Boyce
1926



880 Boyce removed before 1931



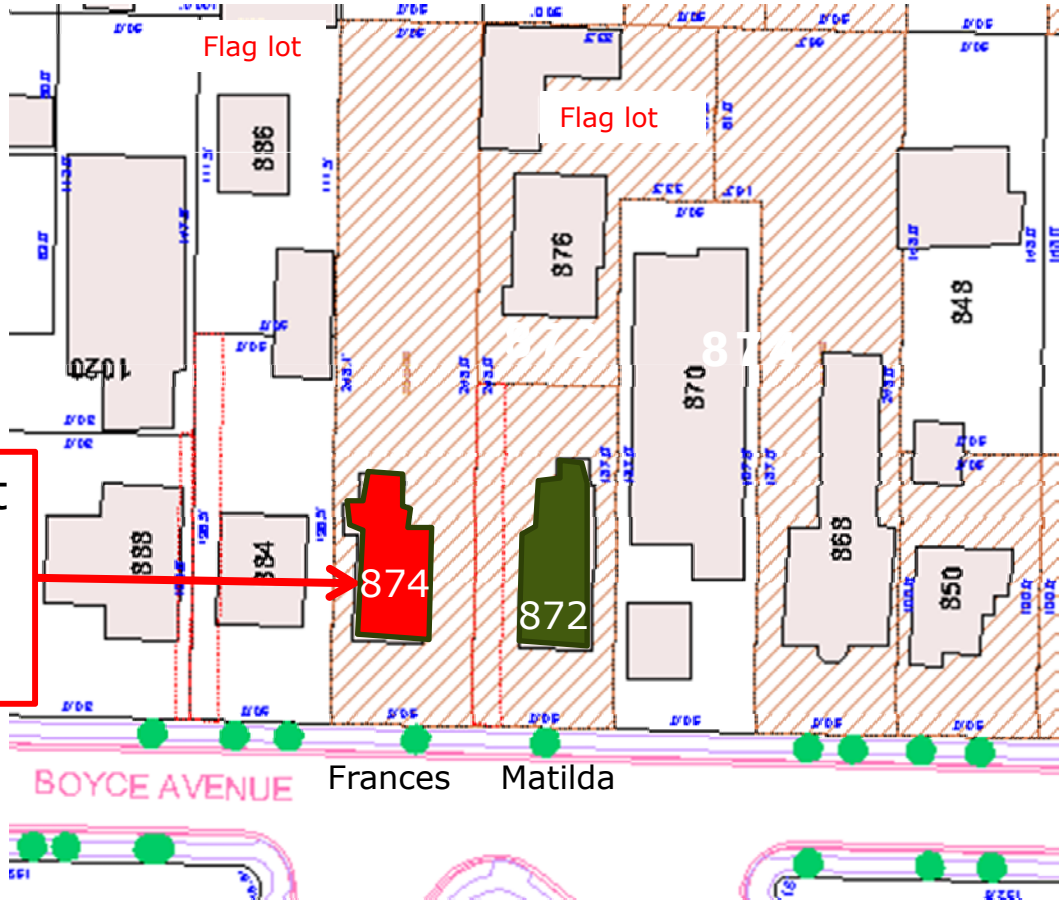
874 and 872 Boyce
Constructed in 1927

<u>1926 Map</u>:
880 Boyce was removed sometime before 1931

<u>1931 Map</u>: 880 Boyce gone
Sisters Frances and Matilda build matching homes

Google street view

Historic Inventory Cat 4 Sister Homes & Nearby Flag Lots



The applicant seeks to preserve this building

- However, strict application of the code prevents forming a flag lot
- Text amendment could affect approximately 25 additional over-sized (12k+) R-1 zoned parcels with historical resource Inventory category 1 to 4 homes, resulting in standard 6,000 sf lots

Sister Homes and Lot Sizes

874 Boyce façade that faces 872 Boyce

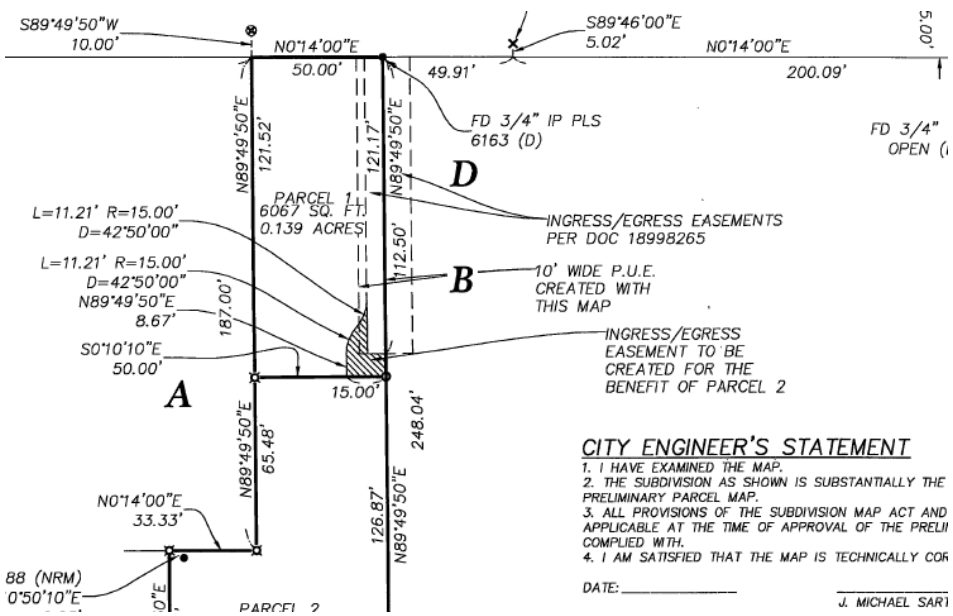
Frances' home 874 Boyce (subject property) is on a 12,400 sf lot

872 Boyce façade that faces 874 Boyce

Matilda's home @ 872 Boyce is now on a 6,067 sf lot with flag lot at the rear for 876 Boyce

Project Overview – Creative Preservation Approach

- Use of an easement to provide access instead of a private street, which would prevent the project from moving forward
- Flag lot allows an additional housing unit
- Preserves an existing historical resource via covenant
- Approach is supported by HRB
- Supported by Comp Plan Policy L-7.1 and Program H2.1.2
- Meets required findings, with Exception
- Neighboring 'sister' home parcel retains access



19' wide existing driveway easement across sister home properties;
7 feet on 872,
12 feet on 874 Boyce

Comp Plan Policy Considerations

- Encourages historic preservation

  Policy L-7.1: Encourage public and private upkeep and preservation of resources that have historic merit, including residences listed in the City's historic resource Inventory, the California Register of Historical Resources, or the National Register of Historic Places.

- Encourages additional housing units

  Program H2.1.2: Allow increased residential densities and mixed use development only where adequate urban services and amenities, including roadway capacity, are available.

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Planning and Transportation Commission

PTC held a public hearing August 28, 2019 and unanimously recommended approval after discussion; the PTC requested information regarding:

(1) # of potentially affected parcels via flag lot amendment: 25 parcels with historic resource sized for divisibility into a flag lot also

(2) Implications: using easements instead of private streets for flag lots:

- Policy approach - some benefit to other properties
- Not precedent setting - applications evaluated based on site conditions: the integrity of the potential historic resource and other factors.

(3) ADU approach instead of subdividing the property:

- Applicant could propose ADU, but the owner's objective is to provide a larger dwelling unit under separate ownership
- ADU approach would not preserve the historic resource, which under current codes, could be displaced with a new single-story residence

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Recommended Motion

Staff recommends that the Council:

1. Find the project exempt from CEQA

2. Approve the proposed Ordinance modifying PAMC 21.20.301

3. Approve the Preliminary Parcel Map with exceptions to allow subdivision of a single (~12,400 sf) parcel into two with (1) a lot width that does not meet the minimum lot width of 60’ and (2) for access easements that exceed 100 feet in length

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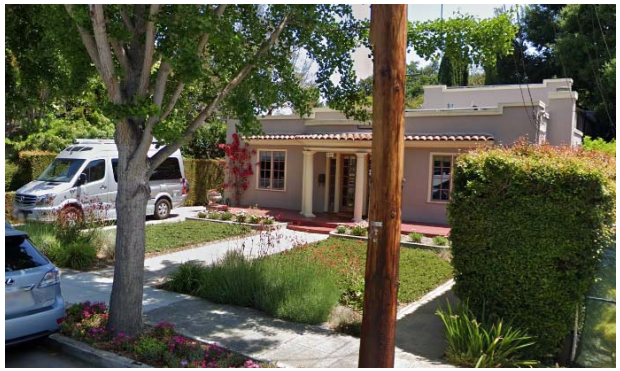
874 Boyce Avenue

October 28, 2019

Sister home: 872 Boyce

Neighborhood context includes older homes



Process

- A Preliminary Parcel Map is required for any subdivision creating less than five parcels or units. Exceptions for the lot design may be requested in accordance with Chapter 21.32. This requires PTC review and Council review and action.

- Code text amendments (other than zoning code amendments) typically only require Council review. The PTC provided input on this code text amendment. The Ordinance amends PAMC Title 21 (Subdivisions and Other Divisions of Land), Chapter 21.20 (Design), Section 21.20.301 (Flag Lots). This text amendment could affect approximately 25 additional R-1 zoned parcels throughout the city having:
  - Historical resource, Inventory categories 1 to 4
  - More than 12,000 sf in lot area (oversized R-1 lots) allowing for subdivision into two 'standard' 6,000 s.f. lots

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Findings

The project does not meet any of the following:

1. The proposed map is not consistent with applicable general and specific plans as specified in Section 65451.
2. That the design or improvement of the proposed subdivision is not consistent with applicable general and specific plans.
3. That the site is not physically suitable for the type of development.
4. That the site is not physically suitable for the proposed density of development.
5. That the design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements are likely to cause substantial environmental damage or substantially and avoidably injure fish or wildlife or their habitat.
6. That the design of the subdivision or type of improvements is likely to cause serious public health problems.
7. That the design of the subdivision or the type of improvements will conflict with easements, acquired by the public at large, for access through or use of, property within the proposed subdivision.

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